

Remarks at Dedication of Statue of General William J. Donovan

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Former Director Helms, former Director Colby, Mrs. Casey, members of the Donovan family, our friends here for this occasion: I have to tell you that about 50 years ago I received an autographed copy of Father Duffy's book about the "Fighting Sixty-Ninth." It was an inspiration to me then, and I can hardly believe that, half a century later, I have the privilege of participating in this ceremony.

Today we recognize General William J. Donovan for the central place he holds in our profession.

We recognize General Donovan as an able and inspiring leader—a quality that earned him the lifelong respect of the unit he commanded in World War I, the "Fighting Sixty-Ninth." It has also earned him the respect and admiration of all of us in intelligence. We understand what a strong leader he had to be to establish the Office of Strategic Services in the midst of strong resistance, to lead the OSS in some of World War II's finest intelligence successes, and to establish the foundations of modern American intelligence—foundations that we in the Central Intelligence Agency build upon today.

The statue we dedicate this afternoon is a symbol of the man—a man of personal bravery, vision, and broad political and military understanding. A man who, according to Bill Casey, was "curious about everything and everyone." He was unusual, Casey felt, for he "realized, earlier and better than most, that 'stranded' information was not much good. It had to be analyzed, dissected, and fitted into the larger whole that modern warfare required."

General Donovan was also a man who inspired great loyalty and great deeds. General Maxwell D. Taylor once asked an old soldier to give him a brief definition of leadership. The man replied, "Leadership is when your leader tells you he is going to take you to hell and back and you find yourself looking forward to the trip."

Under General Donovan's leadership, the OSS achieved much. It helped attain many Allied goals during World War II—working with the French resistance, facilitating the U.S. invasion of North Africa, and infiltrating Hitler's reich. In these efforts and in others, General Donovan never stopped trying to persuade the leaders of this country that intelligence, combined with covert action, could help our nation achieve its strategic goals without all the bloodshed he had witnessed in both World Wars.

To those of us here today, this is General Donovan's greatest legacy. He realized that a modern intelligence organization must not only provide today's tactical intelligence, it must provide tomorrow's long-term assessments. He recognized that an effective intelligence organization must not allow political pressures to influence its counsel. And, finally, he knew that no intelligence organization can succeed without recognizing the importance of people—people with discretion, ingenuity, loyalty, and a deep sense of responsibility to protect and promote American values.

Bill Casey commissioned Lawrence M. Ludtke to create a statue of General Donovan that would be a monument to all that he means to us and to our organization. It was also Bill Casey's idea to place the statue here in our main entrance hall across from the stars that represent Agency officers who have given their lives in the line of duty. Both Bill Donovan and Bill Casey deeply mourned the sacrifice of our people—even in the cause of freedom and democracy.

It is said that President Eisenhower paid tribute to William Donovan as "the last hero." We pay tribute to him today because, as Bill Casey realized, he is our own. Let this statue remind us daily of the enormous contributions that General Donovan made to American intelligence. And let his life continue to be an inspiration to us all.